

Message Text

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ACTION AID-31

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ADP-00 SPM-01 AGR-20 HEW-08 IGA-02 RSR-01

RSC-01 /075 W

----- 105805

R 010615Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5517

INFO AMEMBASSY ACCRA

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E. O. 11652: DECON 7/31/74

TAGS: EAID, SPOP, MA

SUBJ: REQUEST FOR COORDINATION IN USG APPROACHES TO GOMR ON
POPULATION/FAMILY PLANNING MATTERS.

PASS: DEPT TO USDA & AID/PHA/POP/PHD; ACCRA/RPO

1. EMBASSY RECENTLY RECEIVED FORM LETTER FROM ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR FOR INTERNATIONAL EXTENSION PROGRAMS, DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE INDICATING THAT QUESTIONNAIRE HAD BEEN SENT TO MALAGASY GOVERNMENT (GOMR) OFFICIAL REQUESTING INFORMATION ON INVOLVEMENT OF MALAGASY AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE IN POPULATION/FAMILY PLANNING EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES. (QUESTIONNAIRE ACTUALLY SENT TO OFFICE ABOLISHED OVER YEAR AGO AND MALAGASY OFFICIAL IN QUESTION NO LONGER DEALS WITH EXTENSION WORK.) LETTER REQUESTED EMBASSY ASSISTANCE IN GETTING GOMR TO COMPLETE QUESTIONNAIRE. THERE WAS NO INDICATION IN LETTER WHETHER SENDING OF QUESTIONNAIRE HAD BEEN COORDINATED WITH DEPARTMENT OR WITH AID/W POPULATION OFFICE.

2. DURING RULE OF FORMER PRES. TSIRANANA, GOMR WAS OFFICIALLY OPPOSED TO POPULATION/FAMILY PLANNING. WHILE PRESENT RAMANTSOA GOVT HAS NOT YET OUTLINED ITS POLICY IN THIS FIELD, NEWLY CREATED DIRECTORATE OF POPULATION IN MIN SOCIAL AFFAIRS IS STUDYING POSSIBILITY OF RECOMMENDING ACTIVE FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM FOR GOMR. EMBASSY, WITH SUPPORT OF RPO IN ACCRA,
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NOW ATTEMPTING TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO THAT DIRECTORATE.

3. WHILE EFFORTS OF NEW POPULATION DIRECTORATE ARE ENCOURAGING, IT IS BY NO MEANS CERTAIN AT THIS STAGE THAT GOMR WILL ADOPT FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM. MANY MALAGASY, INCLUDING SOME GOMR OFFICIALS, FEEL THAT BECAUSE MADAGASCAR HAS LARGE UNPOPULATED AREAS THERE IS NO NEED TO WORRY ABOUT POPULATION PROBLEMS NOW. FEAR OF EXACERBATING EXISTING TRIBAL FRICTIONS MIGHT ALSO MAKE SOME MALAGASY LEADERS HESITANT ABOUT INITIATING ACTIVE FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM.

4. FOR THESE REASONS, WE BELIEVE THAT USG DEALINGS WITH GOMR ON FAMILY PLANNING SHOULD BE CAREFULLY HANDLED TO AVOID DOING ANYTHING THAT MIGHT BE INTERPRETED AS PRESSURE FROM U.S. ON MADAGASCAR IN THIS SENSITIVE FIELD. WE WOULD LIKE TO ASSURE THAT USG ACTIVITY IN THIS MATTER IS WELL COORDINATED AND, THEREFORE, WE WOULD LIKE TO ASK THAT IN FUTURE ANY COMMUNICATIONS TO GOMR FROM USG AGENCIES ON MATTERS RELATING TO POPULATION/FAMILY PLANNING BE PASSED VIA EMBASSY.
MENDENHALL

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